

**REMARKS**

At the time the present Office Action issued, claims 1 to 16 were pending.

Claim rejections under 35 USC § 102(e)

5 In numbered paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Office Action, claims 1-3 and 16 have been rejected under 35 USC § 102(e) as being anticipated by US Patent 6,675,914 (Masak).

Attorney for Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections.

Enclosed is a Declaration under 37 CFR 1.131, signed by the inventor, Mr. Josef Guillaume Christoffel Coenen. The declaration demonstrates that the invention underlying  
10 the present claims occurred prior to the effective date of Masak.

The Declaration makes reference to attached documents, including a "Request for Patent Action" and accompanying documentation showing and describing detailed embodiments of the invention claimed in the present Application. These documents are stated to have been submitted to Shell Intellectual Property Department on 14 December  
15 2001, which is prior to 19 February 2002, the filing date of Masak.

Therefore, Masak does not qualify as reference under 35 USC § 102(e). Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Allowable subject matter

20 The Examiner is cordially thanked for having identified claims 4-15 to contain allowable subject matter provided that they are rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims (See Numbered Paragraph 3 of the Office Action).

However, in view of the arguments presented in respect of the rejection of the base  
25 claim and intervening claims, Applicant deems it not necessary to rewrite the allowable claims at this point.

Concluding remarks

In conclusion, Attorney has addressed each and every ground for objection and  
30 rejection raised by the Examiner in the Office Action. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.


Attorney respectfully submits that the specification, drawings, and claims are in a state ready for allowance. In the event the Examiner has any questions or issues regarding the present application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned prior to the issuance of any written action.

5

Respectfully submitted,

10

COENEN, Josef Guillaume Christoffel

By:   
Their Attorney, Eugene R. Montalvo  
Registration No. 32,790  
(713) 782-0296 telephone  
(713) 241-6617 facsimile

15 P. O. Box 2463  
Houston, Texas 77252-2463